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Only a Flower.

Only a simple flower,
That never could bear the wintry blast,
And I know but a few short hours can last,
Yet Oh! such a priceless dower!

A few pale buds of white;
Yet dearer to me than wealth untold,
Prized as the miser prizes gold,
For it lay on her breast last night.

Lay on her fair white breast,
Rose and fell with her beating heart;
How gladly would I feel life depart
If there my head might rest!

Yes, 'tis a simple flower;
But given to me by her own dear hand,
And therefore a flower of fairyland,
A bud from Love's inmost bower,

It will die: but not the spell
That hand and that bosom gave.
Our love will, I know, outlive the grave,
For aye unchangeable.

Tale of a Kite.

Such a wondrous kite to fly!
Tinted paper—six feet high.
Nothing small would do for him—
Boy I tell of, Boasting Jim.

Biggest kite of all the lot;
Miles of strongest twine he got.
Small ones go a certain height;
His he'd send clean out of sight.

Down the street, one day in Fall,
Went our Jim, kite, string, and all.
"Kite!" his comrades shout in joy,
"Where are you going with that boy?"

All was ready soon, and—whew!
O'er the trees the giant flew,
Whisking Jimmy from the ground,
Just as if he weighed a pound.

Up they sailed, close to the moon,
Heard the man there sing a tune.
Foreign lands Jim saw and knew—
Tartary and Timbuctoo.

Met a comet in his flight—
Silver tail, just like a kite.
Couldn't starve, you well might say,
Up there in the Milky Way.

Across the sea he flew, and then,
Fondly sighed for home again.
"Smaller kites are safe," he said;
Pop! he woke up in his bed!

THE DIVER'S STORY.

Few readers, perhaps, have ever seen the name of Simon Weaver in print, and fewer still would know who the man was should it be seen.

Divers, as a class, and in spite of all the safe-guards afforded them by modern science, pass a most precarious existence, and each time a descent is made, be the water deep or shallow, the practiced diver feels that perhaps his last glimpse of sun, sky and friends has been taken. Those of the most experience feel this the more keenly.

One night while the snow drove like hail against the only window in the house, facing the sea, I found myself one of a party of divers, wreckers and contractors for such work.

I had asked many questions of the several talkers forming the circle, as to the life, incidents and dangers of the profession, when Captain Stephen L——, an old gray-beard among divers and such ilk, nudged me, and whispered that if I could get old Simon Weaver into the talking humor my desire for stirring incident would be fully gratified.

Cautiously approaching the subject of personal adventure under water, for Weaver proved a little shy, by a few well-timed questions, I succeeded in "bringing him out" to my entire satisfaction.

As I write the words of the old man, I seem to see the earnest glance, the erect figure, and the almost snow-white head shaking and nodding as the memory of his exploits came before his mind.

Taking a fresh attitude in his chair, and casting his eyes from one to the other of us "boys," as he called the younger members of the party, the old diver began.

"Few of our officers on duty off Charleston in 186– will forget when the news came out to the wooden fleet that a monitor had been partially disabled, and that until something could be done her situation was extremely critical. She lay quite near the batteries, and as though divining her danger, their guns were plunging their shot and shell against her with the fiercest energy.

"It was soon known that a diver would be called into requisition to do the work under water, while the guns of Sumter bade fair to demolish the whole ship in a few hours.

"Being the most experienced of the diving corps on duty at that time, the Admiral sent for me without delay, and laying the difficulty before me, asked if I would undertake the job. By a few judiciously put questions I was soon placed in possession of all the facts, the work to be done, and the results to be expected from success.

"The propeller of the vessel had been fouled by some of the numerous obstructions set afloat by the enemy, and not wishing to endanger any other vessel in the same manner, the Admiral desired to send me alongside in a steam picket boat with my best diving gear, and try to make a successful descent.

"In due time we, that is, myself and four more whom I could trust under all peril, arrived at the place of operations. And now, before going further with my story, let me try to give an idea of the situation, and its cause. A vessel had been sent in to reconnoiter, and, if necessary, to fire on the batteries to ascertain their force and strength.

"Proceeding cautiously until within a few hundred yards of Sumter, she had unconsciously drifted too close to the line of obstructions defending the entrance to the harbor, and in turning to come out, her propeller, as I said before, had become entangled among ropes and chains. All efforts to release the ship from her perilous position had failed, hence the call for a diver. Immediately on perceiving the state of affairs, no hard task, the enemy had opened a fearful fire from all guns within range on the single craft, and seemed bent on her destruction before assistance could reach her.

"The shot fell fast and furious against the iron of her turret and side armor, while the water on all sides fairly boiled from the frequent shot striking its surface. It seemed a veritable iron hail.

"As our little picket boat approached the scene of conflict, the firing suddenly ceased, and we were fortunate enough to get below with the apparatus before the storm again burst over the trembling ship. The cause of this apparent kindness was made known to us the following day by a deserter from Fort Sumter.

"As the picket steamer approached the monitor, the enemy imagined that a message from the Yankee commander was about to be received, looking to an armistice or surrender, so slackened fire. After waiting a few moments, and the expected flag of truce not making its appearance, the enemy saw that somehow they had been outwitted, and the shower of shot and shell seemed to increase in fierceness as they reopened fire.

"In a short time I saw how matters stood, and succeeded in finding a place on the lee side of the turret, where, if the ship could be kept in one position, no shot could reach me. Carefully instructing my men as to their duties, I at length got my ladder overboard on the safe side, and made it fast in such a manner that should the wind change or rise during my absence under water, my means of escape should not be entirely cut off. Leading my air pipe up through the turret and out through one of the ports, I secured them to my helmet, and requested that all firing from the ship be suspended during my absence, for experience had taught me the danger of a heavy discharge directly overhead of a diver.

"The position of the turret favored my request, and placing its back to the enemy enabled me to use the gun port as I have described. As my life would hang upon a thread at best, I made every arrangement for safety that experience could suggest, even going myself into the engine-room and enjoining upon the engineer of the watch not to allow the engines to be started upon any consideration until my return from the perilous undertaking, the success or failure of which assured the safety or loss of the vessel. The pump for supplying me with air was fixed in the turret-chamber, and as the fragments of shot, which still poured in from Sumter, might cut the air tube as it crossed the deck, I had arranged a stout iron pipe as a sheath, and discarded entirely the usual signal-line.

"All being in readiness, after personally inspecting all of the apparatus, I cautiously made my way to the ladder, and having fixed my helmet firmly in its place, and secured my kit of tools, hammer, saw, chisels, etc., to the strong belt attached for the purpose, began my slow descent.

"Fortunately, the water was quite clear and free from mud, so I had no difficulty in seeing everything with perfect distinctness. Gradually nearing the bottom, for the depth of water exceeded the draught of vessels of less than four feet, I became aware of quite a strong current setting me against the ship, which, while lessening my fear of being swept out of reach of my ladder, rendered working more difficult. As usual, my progress was attended by numbers of curious fish, and as I neared the bottom one or two huge fellows passed close by, but seemed intent on other prey, leaving me in peace.

"Once or twice I was somewhat startled by a heavy splash overhead, and a dull thud, followed by the rapid descent of a shot or shell within easy view, and as it would settle into the soft, oozy bottom, a tiny cloud of mud would for a moment obscure it from view. I felt a constant fear from seeing these oft-recurring clouds, lest some of them might be the spluttering fuze of an unexploded shell.

"Although an old hand at the diving business, it had never before been my fortune to operate in action, so I was not a little anxious, as you may imagine, as to the effect of a shell exploding on the bottom. I was not long waiting, and found out to my entire satisfaction, as I will presently tell you.

"Well, at length I reached bottom, and slowly trod my way along the bends of the ship to the base of operations, the disabled screw, sometimes stepping on rusty shot, and once I nearly tripped over the stock of some old rust-worn anchor. Being but fifteen or sixteen feet below the surface, I had no difficulty in perceiving the trouble with the propeller, which was this: a piece of chain attached to the floating obstructions had become so wound about the propeller-shaft, between the blades and stern-post, as to become perfectly rigid.

"My tools being prepared for just such work, I began operations at once, and soon had two or three of the links, which were quite small, severed, and as I afterward learned, released the strain so suddenly that the engines gave one quick, short, partial revolution, 'on a vacuum,' one of the engineers told me afterward, and one of the blades striking my expiration tube, threw me from my feet, and for a moment it seemed that my fate was sealed.

"The screw stopped as suddenly as it had started, and somehow I struggled to my feet again. Seeing cut a few strokes more were needed to complete my job, I soon had the good old-ship in fighting trim again, so far at least as her propeller was concerned.

"Being now at liberty to return, I cautiously retraced my steps to where the ladder hung idly swinging to and fro in the water, and was about to mount to the surface, when with a crash and roar of ten thousand shots, a big shell fell apparently right over my head, and after what seemed but the fraction of a second, settled, as I thought, directly upon me. Passing but a few feet distant, it had scarcely reached the bottom when the very earth and sea seemed shattered to atoms.

"The shell had exploded almost beside me! By some means the books provided in the breast of my armor had become fastened to a rung of my ladder, else this tale had never been told. Stunned and racked as it was, the instinct of self-preservation urged me to attempt the ascent of my only road to safety, the ladder, when, to my horror, the current began swaying me back and forth in such a manner that I found it impossible to do aught but hold on and trust to the chapter of accidents for relief.

"In an instant after I became aware of the current, a dull, regular beat, united to a seeming tremor of the ship, convinced me that the ship was under way, and probably steaming out to the fleet. A glimpse or two at the bottom assured me of this, for I could plainly see it gliding past until the shoals deepened and nothing could be seen underneath me but water. Imagine my situation, you youngsters who think you have seen danger—towed to sea under a monitor!

"The motion rapidly grew more violent, and had it not been for the hooks I have spoken of, death would have been inevitable, for my strength would not have enabled me to retain my hold on the ladder, and I should have drowned, my body weighed down by armor beyond recovery.

"All of this time, in reality minutes, but seemingly hours, my faithful men within the turret chamber had not ceased to give me a plentiful supply of air, so my only danger lay in being swept away. After what seemed miles of ground passed over, and hours of time, the beat of the engine grew gradually slower, then stopped, and no sooner did I feel the pressure of the current relax, than I prepared to make the best of way to the surface.

"I remember no more. A deadly faint seized me, and for hours I lay without life, vibrating between this world and the one beyond. Returning senses revealed my four men around me, on the wardroom table, doing their utmost in my behalf, and only gave way to the surgeon when a heavy groan and slowly opening eyes told that my life was safe.

"I speedily recovered, and for the first time learned the details of my great peril and marvelous escape.

"Immediately on the strain being taken off of the propeller by the chains being cut, the engines gave the quick partial revolution which I have mentioned, and the engineer, as in duty bound, of course, reported that the disability to the machinery being removed he was prepared to go ahead at any moment.

"It was but a few minutes after this that the tide began to flow, causing the current I have spoken of, and the devoted vessel bade fair to be again drifted among the dreaded obstructions and still nearer to Sumter, whose guns never ceased their roar all this time.

"Captain ——, to prevent this threatened catastrophe, and feeling certain that I was clear of danger from the propeller, determined to go ahead a short distance to clear all danger from the obstructions, and then to await my return to the surface before proceeding farther.

"Carefully watching the air-pipe leading overboard, the engines were started slowly, and as the ship gathered headway, and the pipe remained without visible strain, it was concluded that my ascent had begun, as in truth was the fact; so instead of coming to after steaming a short distance, the ship was headed for the fleet, and only came to anchor when within hail of the flag-ship. The rest I have told you.

"As the result of that day's work, I was sent home, on the sick-list, and from that day to this, young man," turning to me as he spoke, "I have never been inside a diver's dress, and never intend to be again."

As the old man approached the conclusion, he grew quite excited, as indeed had his listeners, and as the tones of his voice died away, the wind outside, gathering fresh fury, seemed to shake the old house to its very foundation.

WOMEN VOTERS.—The names of several women were inscribed on the voters' register in New York. Mary A. Leland writes describing the courteous treatment she received at the registration office of Nineteenth District of the Sixteenth Ward. Learning that Victoria A. Woodhull and Tennie C. Claflin had registered their names, Mary A. Leland determined to follow their example. The registrars referred to the Constitution of the United States, and not finding any interdiction of female registration, politely acceded to the request of the lady aspirant to the privilege of suffrage.

Down in the Mines.

We are now in the coal mines, says one who has been there, and the passage we walk along so freely was the bed of a seam of coal, long since removed by the miners who have pushed on into the bowels of the hill, and are now at work miles away tearing out the shining walls that dispute their further progress. To the right and to the left narrow chambers, such as we are in, branch off, some on upward grades, some downward.

At intervals we are confronted by massive wooden doors used to control currents of air and secure ventilation. After walking a good mile, and seeing nothing but mules hauling the coal cars along the track to some place in the mysterious distance, we come at last to the chambers where the miners are at work. We find these chambers to be passages like those through which we entered: some broad and high, some low and cramped, all supplied with iron tracks leading to the end. At the extremities of these chambers or workings the miner stands, pick or bar in hand, delving and wrenching to remove huge masses of coal from the seam whose lead he is following. Here is the coal we seek, and here is the miner, laboring patiently by the dim light of his single lamp, isolated by walls of rock and earth from his companions, water dripping from the roof and standing in pools at his feet, in constant danger, and alloted to incessant toil. The huge chunks of coal, wrought out by manual force or blasting powder, fall into heaps on the floor and are loaded by the miner or his help into a car that stands ready, then drawn by mules along the gangway to the shaft, and hoisted by machinery to the surface above. This shaft is the commencement of operations in opening a mine, and is connected by gangways with every chamber worked, and sometimes extends a hundred fathoms into the earth.

A mine many hundred feet deep is in splendid working order; men, boys, and horses, filled with animation and industry, throng the chambers; the sound of the busy hammer, pick and car enlivens the sense, and everything in cheerful contrast with the gloom that envelopes all. Suddenly, by some unseen cause, the circulation of air is interrupted; fire-damp immediately accumulates to an explosive degree in some portion of the mine, and an unthinking miner enters the region and sets the whole in a blaze, which suffocates and consumes everything in reach. Such is the force of this concussion and those succeeding, that those out of the range of flame are stunned or prostrated by the shock. Their lights are blown out and the warning that the explosion may be rolling along the chambers to meet them, causes many to hurry to the nearest shaft. Unusual heaps of rubbish impede their progress, and they wander in the wild confusion to uncertain alleys, and sink down, overcome by noxious vapors, or are swallowed up in the seething atmosphere of flame that may penetrate every part of the mine.

The miners of this region earn very high wages the year round when they work. Those who are sober and frugal own their own houses and save money. The life is rather an adventurous one, and the temptation is to spend their earnings freely. The grocery bills of some small families average fifty and sixty dollars per month, the women declaring that their good men work hard for their money, and their only comfort is in what they eat and drink. But this underground work is not necessarily more severe than certain kinds of labor done upon the surface. It is seldom that a miner will leave the works and come to the sod to earn his living. The mining is done at so much per car, and they can have their own way, and in a dry well-ventilated mine they suffer no severe extremes of weather, and are generally healthy. But in mines where the beds are thin, and the way in and out is through narrow, cramped alleys, filled with foul air, water streaming from the roof and knee-deep on the floor, and the air so heavy that a candle sheds no light ten or fifteen feet away and must be constantly swung to keep up the flame, then the miner's life is one of unending hardship, and must be endured to be appreciated.

The Labor Question.

Some time ago it was stated that arrangements were making by the Trades' Union Societies, for a general strike, not only throughout the United States, but throughout the entire civilized world. This labor question is assuming formidable proportions throughout Europe. In England, Belgium, France, Holland, and Germany powerful organizations exist among workmen for the amelioration of their condition and for the devising of schemes for the efficient prosecution of the great war on capital. The workingmen's committee of the various European societies have summoned a general congress of workmen to meet in Berlin at some date this Winter, and in the summons the committee suggest as their platform the organization of a general strike for the daily term of labor and for a general increase of wages.

Wendell Phillips lately delivered in Boston, a lecture, the first of a course which he is to deliver in various parts of the country, on the labor question. Mr. Phillips' discourse is a strong denunciation of the wrongs inflicted on labor by capital, and an argument to prove that the tendency of the present great movement is the equalization of property.

Mr. Thomas Brassey, one of the largest employers of labor in England, proposes the adoption of the system in vogue at sea, namely, the employment of three sets of men to work eight hours each out of the twenty-four.

OIL WELLS.—One of the chief causes for the cessation in the flow of oil wells is the accumulation of paraffine. Torpedoes discharged with dynamite, or other explosive compounds, have been used for years as a means of removing the paraffine. This device, however, not only failed to remove the difficulty, but even increased it sometimes by wholly stopping up the wells. It is now proposed to burn out the paraffine by means of oxygen, which is brought in contact with it by means of pumps and pipes. The fire is commenced at the point nearest the surface, and is continued downward and out into the lateral crevices, wherever the paraffine is located.

WATCHING THEM.—Forty thousand dollars was collected on passengers' baggage at New York during the last year, being a larger sum than has ever been collected before on such goods in one year. This is the result of the examination which is considered so obnoxious. It is estimated that in nine cases out of ten the owners of such baggage would smuggle through the goods thus discovered and taxed, and cheat the government if it was not for the inspectors.

THE SUFFERERS.—Rev. E. B. French, Chairman of the Relief Committee, Hartford, Wis., in acknowledging the receipt of a remittance, states that the losses in Chicago cannot compare with the northern conflagrations, which destroyed whole families and their possessions, and maimed hundreds for life. Many hundred families are, he says, thrown upon the public for help until next harvest.

A Tragedian's Little Joke.

One of the noblest tragedians on the stage, Charles Young, was an irrepressible *farceur* in private society, and constantly playing, with imperturbable gravity, the most whimsical pranks in public. He undertook to drive Charles Matthews (*fils*) to Cashiobury, on a visit to the Earl of Essex. Having passed through the turnpike, and paid the toll, he pulled up at the next gate he came to, and, addressing himself most politely to a woman who issued from the toll-house, inquired if Mr. ——, the toll-taker, whose name he saw above the door, happened to be in the way. The woman answered that he was not in the house, but that she would send for him if the gentleman wished to see him particularly.

"Well, I am sorry to trouble you, madam; but I certainly should like to have a few minutes' conversation with him," replied Young.

Upon this the woman called to a little boy: "Tommy, run and tell your father a gentleman wants to speak to him."

Away ran Tommy down a straight, long path in the grounds of a nursery and seedsman, the entrance to which was close to a turnpike. Young sat bolt upright in the tilbury, solemn and silent, to the astonishment of Mathews, who asked him what on earth he wanted with the man.

"I want to consult him on a matter of business," replied Young.

After some five or six minutes the boy, who had entered the building on the extreme end of the path, reappeared, followed by a man putting on a jacket as he walked, and in due time both of them stood beside the tilbury. The man touched his hat to Young.

"You wished to see me, sir?"

"Are you Mr. —— ?"

"Yes, sir."

"The Mr. —— who is entrusted to take the toll at this gate?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then you are precisely the person who can give me the information I require. You see, Mr. ——, I paid sixpence at the gate at ——, and the man who took it gave me this little bit of paper" (producing a ticket from his waistcoat pocket), "and he assured me that if I showed it to the proper authorities at this gate, I should be allowed to drive through without payment."

"Why, of course!" said the man, staring with amazement at Young.

"That ticket clears this gate? Then you do not require me to pay anything here?"

"No! Why, any fool——"

"My dear Mr. ——, I'm so much obliged to you. I should have been so sorry to have done anything wrong, and therefore, wished to have your opinion on the subject. A thousand thanks. Good morning, Mr. ——."

And on drove Young, followed, as the reader may easily imagine, by a volley of imprecations and epithets of anything but a flattering description so long as he was within hearing.

Protection from Poisons.

At a recent meeting of the Boston Society of Medical Sciences, as reported in the *Medical and Surgical Journal*, the question was discussed of the protection acquired by the human skin against the action of certain animal poisons, after repeated inoculation, one gentleman claiming that the frequent inoculation of some poisons gave a gradual immunity from any poisonous effects. He instanced the effects of mosquito-bites, which he thought were more severe in children than in adults, much more severe in foreigners who had recently arrived in this country than in natives, and in support of this spoke of a whole family, recently arrived from England, which he had just seen, upon the members of which the bites of mosquitoes had produced a violent eruption of the skin resembling pemphigus. He thought that the immunity derived from frequent inoculations was analogous to that from vaccine matter against voriola. He said that he considered it as established that poisonous snakes were not killed by their own poisons; insects, however, he said, did not enjoy this immunity, as wasps and bees were known to kill each other by their poison. He was supported by another gentleman, who said that in regions where black flies abound, persons after a few years are not affected by the poison. This immunity is not obtained in one season, but only after a prolonged residence; such persons are bitten as at first, but escape all the disagreeable effects from which a non-resident suffers.

CHLOROFORM DID IT.—Dr. Goldsmith of Rutland, Vermont, relates an incident occurring in his army experience, illustrating the power of chloroform in detecting feigned contraction of the limbs. While in Jefferson Hospital there came a man who had run the gauntlet of several hospitals, having been discharged on the ground that a contraction of his arm, which was bent up so that it nearly touched his shoulder or breast, was incurable. It was so rigidly and firmly fixed that I could not with any strength (and the doctor is a "heavy weight") which seemed to me not to risk the breaking of his arm, straighten it. I directed the nurses to watch him at night, and go to his bedside, and suddenly try to straighten it. They uniformly reported that they were unable to accomplish the desired result. He was then allowed to pass out and visit all the rum shops at will, in the hope that under the influence of alcoholic stimulants the case might be solved, but it found no solution. I then put him under the influence of chloroform, and as soon as the chloroform began to act his arm was straightened out, and I tied a board on the back of it, and when he awoke and looked at his arm, he said, "Well, doctor, I suppose I will have to go back to my regiment?" I replied, "That's just where you will have to go, my friend." He went.

FISH IN JAPAN.—Mr. Brooks writes from Japan that the national food is fish. There is not an ocean or river creature that the Japs do not eat, even sharks, and the uglier the more appetizing. And most of the fish sold are not dead fish, but living, jumping, wriggling fish. You buy an eel all squirming. The fish-market men bring their fish to market in water tubs, and the fishermen keep a huge bamboo water fish tank on each side of the junks, into which they throw the creatures that they haul up, or in. So much is thought of the fish here, that on a certain festival day every family that has had a boy born during the year hangs out a great painted fish to boast of it.

THE ENGLISH STRIKE.—The Newcastle engineers resumed work after a five month's strike. You may, says an English correspondent, almost say it was settled in five minutes. Mr. Joseph Cowen of *The Newcastle Chronicle*, and Mr. Philipson, town clerk, found themselves all at once endowed with the requisite cleverness and good sense, coupled with an intimate knowledge of what both sides would insist on and what both would concede. The men go to work on a 57 hours time-table from now to Jan 1, 1872, then the nine hours pure and simple are to be the rule.

A Colorado man has organized a company for catching wild horses and taming them, and it pays well.

An Agricultural Locomotive.

We saw recently at an agricultural fair in England, says a correspondent, a number of engines of various patterns. All are on wheels, and either move themselves or can be dragged along by horses. One particular engine stood alone on the grass with steam up, and a light blue cloud of smoke was escaping from its slender smokestack. Near by was a broad circular track, showing where it had been driven round to show its paces. The grass near it did not seem to have been injured in the least. The boiler rested upon four wheels. The forward truck was movable. A small platform in front, with a steering-wheel, showed how the machine was guided. The driving-wheels were six feet in diameter, and shod with rubber tires two inches thick. The cab for the engineer hung over the rear and carried the coals. The water-tank was under the boiler. The exhaust steam could be turned into this, thereby saving fuel greatly. The cylinder, safety-valve, etc., were placed on top. There was a piece of short shafting on top, with a fly-wheel attached. From the wheel and shaft power was taken to drive the saw, run the thrashing-machine, elevate the hay, or do any farm work required.

With a push the train backs up to a huge straw-elevator. This machine is on wheels, and resembles one of the ice-elevators used in our ice-houses at home. It is used to lift straw in bundles to the lofts or to the tops of ricks. The elevator being coupled the whole train is ready to start. It consists of the locomotive, twelve feet long and weighing seven tons, the thrasher, weighing five tons and fifteen feet long, and the straw-elevator, three tons, and twenty feet—a total of fifteen tons and forty-seven feet in length.

When all is ready, the engine starts gently and easily, takes a great sweep over the grass and starts for one of the entrance gates of the fair grounds. This gate leads to a narrow, winding lane, with only room for one team. The engine enters the lane at an angle and the train follows after, without touching the gate posts. It would take a careful driver, with a docile team, to do as well with horses.

Immediately on entering the lane the engineer comes to a soft place in the road. The wheels sink into the mud and stick fast. The crowd gathers around, and becomes, after the usual English manner, derisive and doubtful. Really, if this is the style of the horse, he develops faults suddenly. Without a word the owner steps up to the driver, and asks for a "claw." This is a cast-iron shoe, made to fit the wheels. The gentleman quickly fastens it on; the wheel turns round, and when the sharp edge of the claw strikes the ground the train moves on a foot or so. The claw is used again, and the slough is easily passed.

He remarks: "That was an extra bad slough. Don't meet such greasy mud often. When we do we unshackle the engine or use the claws. With a chain we can drag the team through, and go on. The engine, when alone, will pass any ordinary mud-hole with ease."

Drinking Leather in Tea.

After the many revelations recently published on the adulteration of tea, our tea drinkers ought to be prepared for worse news than that they are, according to the discovery of a French savant, consuming a quantity of leather in their favorite beverage, sufficient in the course of a year, for the manufacture of a stout pair of boots. The consumption of this wholesome article of food is not confined to the drinkers of "lie tea," but includes even such as indulge in the most costly and genuine qualities, supposing them to mix the beverage with milk or cream. It is to this most innocuous of drinks that we are indebted for the addition to our cherished evening draught of an ingredient proverbial for its indigestibility. Tea leaves contain a portion of tannic acid, which in the liquid state is suspended in solution. Milk, on the other hand, contains a proportion of white of egg, and the two constituents being the main ingredients of leather, readily combine on mixing the fluids, adding by the globules or leather-like substances which they form to the opacity of the compound liquid. We do not apprehend that this discovery will deter any of our readers from taking their accustomed allowance of tea. It may possibly, by the scientific explanation of the process, even add a new relish to their enjoyment. At any rate they ought to be thankful to learn what excellent powers of digestion they are gifted with, enabling them to digest shoe-leather, though even this may be no novel intelligence after the convincing demonstrations furnished by their butchers.

Story of a Magpie.

"I will tell you a story," says a writer, "in regard to women who eat dainty morsels in the absence of their lords. There was a lady who had a Magpie in a cage, which talked of everything which it saw done. Now it happened that the lord of the household preserved a large eel in a pond, and kept it very carefully in order to give it to some of his lords or of his friends, in case they should visit him. So it happened that the lady said to her female attendant that it would be good to eat the great eel; and accordingly they ate it, and agreed that they would tell their lord that the otter had eaten it. And when the lord returned, the pie began to say to him, 'My lord, my lady has eaten the eel.' Then the lord went to his pond, and missed the eel, and he went into the house, and asked his wife what had become of it. She thought to excuse herself easily; but he said that he knew all about it, and that the pie had told him. The result was that there was great quarrelling and trouble in the house; but when the lord was gone away, the lady and her female attendant went to the pie, and plucked all its feathers from its head, saying, 'You told about the eel.' And so the poor pie was quite bald. But from that time forward, when it saw any people who were bald, or had large foreheads, the pie said to them, 'Ah! you told about the eel."

VERY SAD.—A lady writing from Chicago says, one of the saddest features is the suffering among women in delicate health. It is estimated by a responsible physician of our city that five hundred babes were born on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, after the fire among the sufferers. Forty were born in Lincoln Park on Tuesday. Events of the most heart-rending character are being brought to light. One poor woman on the North Side was in bed with a babe a few hours' old when the house caught fire. The inmates in their flight forgot the poor woman and her babe. She rose from her bed, rapped a sheet around herself and child, and made her way to the street. There she was found dead, with the babe in her arms.

FLOGGING IN THE BRITISH ARMY.—An English journal states that last year in the English army 41 cavalry soldiers were flogged, who received 19,751 lashes in all. In the infantry 96 men received 4,647 lashes, in the artillery 41 men 5,750 lashes, and in the engineers one man 25 lashes, while in the militia no case of flogging occured. Thus, in the cavalry, for example, each of the unfortunate culpits drew as his share 489 strokes of the cat, and a fraction.

A Famous Auctioneer.

The most efficient auctioneer that ever lived, probably, was George Robins, of London, who flourished about thirty or forty years ago. His advertisements were marvelous pieces of composition, which none of his successors in the same business have ever succeeded in imitating. He was a very "Admirable Crichton," a man of universal knowledge, never at a loss, and with a power of magnifying the good qualities of the wares he was selling, such as no auctioneer, before or since his day, has ever possessed. It was a literary treat to see him sell a library; but the place best fitted for the display of his abilities, was the sale of a fine country-house.

In 1820, the magnificent Fonthill Abbey, owned by the brilliant Beckford, came to the hammer. That it would be knocked down for one quarter of its real value seemed inevitable, but Robins was equal to the emergency. Taking the advantage of the great fame of Beckford, and the rumors which described the house as surpassing the grandest palaces of the East in sumptuous elegance, he announced that no one would be admitted to view the house who did not purchase a catalogue—price, one guinea. The fashionable world felt bound to see these wonderful sights, and rushed in crowds to buy catalogues. Eighty thousand of them were sold, and people journeyed from all parts of the kingdom, to feast their eyes on the marvelous Fonthill. In the height of the *furore* the sale began, and lasted thirty-three days. The abbey was knocked down for £330,000—a third more than its worth. Pictures, furniture, etc., brought fabulous sums. Raphael's Saint Catherine sold for £5,250, and the contents of the house realized the enormous sum of £1,000,000.

Once Robins had to sell, amongst the effects of a deceased merchant, silver-ware amounting to over six hundred ounces. Duplicates of the pieces had been made in Sheffield ware, for daily use, and by some accident, the real silver, on the first day of sale, was knocked down as plated. The next day, the Sheffield ware being put up, its real character was at once discovered. The purchasers of the silver disappeared, and Robins promptly paid the loss out of his own pocket.

The Swedes in Maine.

In manners the Swedes who have settled in Maine are said to be modest and retiring, but noticeably kind, obliging and courteous. To strangers they show the politest attentions, and tender them the warmest hospitalities. They are also kindly considerate of each other's happiness and welfare, and train their children into strictest habits and morality, obedience and politeness. Their dress is at present a strange mixture of American and Swedish costumes. Those who retain the national dress wear wooden shoes, made long and low, painted black, and with high heels and pointed or turned up toes. The dress of the men does not otherwise differ from the various costumes seen in our own country, save that they are of somewhat antiquated patterns. The costumes of the women and children are quaint and queer enough. The women and girls all wear hankerchiefs made of the nicest silk, folded with great care over their heads, and tied firmly but softly under their chin, looking very odd, to be sure, but at the same time both sensible, pretty and comfortable. A long narrow apron is also an indispensable appendage to a complete toilet. The dress itself has generally a straight, full skirt, with one or two tucks, a plaint short, round waist, and short, straight, sleeves. The little children look funny enough clad precisely like father and mother. The panted, vested and coated little boys, and the nice little maidens in long dresses, narrow aprons and kerchiefs, demurely and soberly tied under the chin, present the appearance of dwarfed editions of manhood and womanhood. Some of the ladies have dispensed with the kerchief, and supplanting their places are successfully-attempted chignons, surmounted by flat straw hats. Quite a number of silk dresses, a few gold chains and some nice jewelry were also conspicuous. It is to be remembered that these colonists are by no means poor, but brought with them a deal of baggage and money.

A Cuban Execution.

Lopez has been executed in Havana. Having been condemned by court-martial he was garroted at the side of the Castle of the Principe and outside the city. He saluted the crowd, showing the shackles which pinioned him, when at the foot of the steps leading to the platform, and the officers in charge of him—volunteers—fearing that he might address the people, hurried him up the steps, wounded as he was. When he sat down on the bench it was found to be too low to allow his neck to come up to the fatal iron collar. The second time he sat down he was too high. At last, after the fifth attempt, the garrote was adjusted round his throat. The instrument was so badly arranged that it broke on the first twist given to the screw by the executioner, and then the victim had to be lifted up, while with his head hanging in the collar the garrote was repaired. When Lopez sat down the seventh time, he seemed to strain his nerves for one supreme effort, and lifting his hands to Heaven, yelled forth in a voice heard by the whole assembled crowd, "Death to Spain!" What followed is conceivable only of cannibals. Two volunteer officers ascended to the platform, and to prove that their victim was really dead, they lifted him from the bench several times, they made the executioner give several more twists to the screw, and took the face of the corpse—which was an undistinguishable mass of bloody flesh, with the eyes protruding from the sockets—in their hands, turning it toward the people.

How He Did It.

A certain burglar, on being taken to Sing Sing prison was asked what was his profession? "A bank clerk," said he. He then told the following story to illustrate how he obtained his profession. The method is certainly ingenious, though not to be recommended for general adoption:

"I was watching a country bank for some little time, and I noticed that the paying teller wore a striped coat and straw hat. The clerks left the bank at about 1 o'clock for dinner. I got a straw hat and a striped coat, and for several days took my seat on the steps of the bank. One day I saw my opportunity. The paying teller and most of the clerks were out. I went in, pulled off my hat and coat, hung them up where I had seen the teller hang his, and went around to the desk. The books were open, and here and there were piles of bills. I went to work at the books, and made the most remarkable entries ever recorded in the books of any bank in this world or any other. I pocketed the bills one after another, and putting on my coat and hat, I went on my way fifteen thousand dollars better off than ever I was before."

A Michigan doctor who was arrested because his patient died, has been acquitted on the ground that he did the best he could, giving all the medicine he knew the names of.

About Fresh Air.

A Scotch journal says that whoever sleeps uncomfortably cool will get sick. To hoist the window sky high when the mercury is at zero is an absurdity. The cooler a sleeping apartment is the more unhealthy does it become, because cold condenses the carbonic acid formed by the breathing of the sleeper. It settles near the floor, and is re-breathed, and if in a very condensed form he will die before morning. Hence we must be governed by circumstances: the first thing is, you must be comfortably warm during sleep, otherwise you are not refreshed, and inflammation of the lungs may be engendered, and life destroyed within a very few days. An open door and an open fire-place are sufficient for ordinary purposes in cold weather.

When outer windows are opened, it is well to have them down at the top two or three inches, and up at the bottom for the same space, in miasmic localities; and these are along the water courses, beside mill-ponds, marshes, bivouacs, river bottoms, flat islands, and the like. It is the most important from the 1st of August until several severe frosts have been noticed, to sleep with all external doors and windows closed, because the cool air of sunset causes the condensation of the poisonous emanations which were caused by the heat of noonday sun to rise far above the earth. This condensation makes the air "heavy" by the great solidification of the emanations by cold; these resting on the surface of the earth in the more concentrated and malignant form, they are breathed into the lungs and swallowed into the stomach, corrupting and poisoning the blood with great rapidity. By daylight these condensations are made so compact by the protracted coolness of the night they are too near the surface of the earth to be breathed into the system; but as the sun begins to ascend these heavy condensations begin to rise to the height of several feet above the ground, and are freely taken into the system by every breath and swallow; hence, the hours of sunrise and sunset are the most unhealthy hours of the twenty-four in the localities named; and noontide, when the sun is the hottest, is the most healthy portion of the day, because the miasma is so much rarified that it ascends rapidly to the upper regions. The general lessons are:—First, to avoid exposure to the outdoor air in miasmatic localities for the hours including sunrise and sunset. Second, having a blazing fire on the hearth of the family room at these hours to rarify and send the miasma upward. Third, take breakfast before going out of doors in the morning, and take tea before sundown; then being out at night is not injurious.

The Story of the Wrecked Whalers.

The following article was signed by the Captains of the thirty-three wrecked whalers:

"Know all men by these presents—That we, Masters of whale ships now lying at Point Belcher, after holding a meeting concerning our dreadful situation, have all come to the conclusion that our ships cannot be got out this year, and there being no harbor that we could get our vessels into, and not having provisions enough to feed our crews to exceed three months, and being in a barren country where there is neither food nor fuel to be obtained, we feel ourselves under the painful necessity of abandoning our vessels and trying to work our way south with our boats, and, if possible, get on board of the ships that are south of the ice. We think it would not be prudent to leave a single soul to look after our vessels as the first westerly gale will crowd the ice ashore, and either crush the ships or drive them hard upon the beach.

"Three of the fleet have already been crushed, and two are now half out of the water which have been crushed by the ice, and are leaking badly. We have five wrecked crews distributed among us. We have barely room to swing at anchor between the pack of ice and the beach, and are lying in three fathoms of water. Should we be cast upon the beach, it would be at least eleven months before we could look for assistance, and in all probability nine out of ten of the men would die of starvation or scurvy before the opening of the Spring. Therefore, we have arrived at this conclusion, after the return of our expedition under command of Captain D. Frazer, of the Florida, he having with whale boats worked to the southward as far as Blossom Shoals, and found that the ice pressed ashore the entire distance from our position in the Shoals, leaving in several places only sufficient depth of water for our boats to pass through, and thus liable at any moment to be frozen over during the twenty-four hours which would cut off our return even by the boats, as Captain Frazer had to work through a considerable quantity of young ice during his expedition, which cut up his boats badly."

HORRIBLE.—While we of this country have been suffering much from fire, China and India have been visited by desolating floods, which have done an enormous amount of damage. A Tientsin correspondent of the *North China Herald* says that after the partial subsidence of the great floods, many human bodies were found floating about in the east plain. The distress of the inhabitants was great, and thousands of them would probably die for want of food. The banks of the Yung-ting river—an affluent of the Peiho—has burst and occasioned the mischief. Southern China also was suffering, and bodies of drowned persons were floating past Swatow. In India the city of Jounpore, containing over twenty-five thousand inhabitants, has been dissolved and borne away by the rising waters of the river Gumti. This disaster was accompanied, or rather preceded, by deficient harvests, and the whole section of the country is in the deepest distress.

POTATOES.—If kept in pits over winter, select a dry spot, cover with dry straw, and then throw over it three or four inches of soil. Let them remain so until winter